



Preventing Vision Problems

How Can I Prevent Vision Problems? Preventive eye care is the first line of defense against vision problems. Early detection of vision problems may offer more effective treatment options:

- Have periodic eye exams (every 2-3 years for healthy patients under 50, yearly for patients over 50 or those with known health risk factors).
- Know your family's history for any eye problems.
- Follow a healthy lifestyle.
- Eat a nutritious diet for eyesight.
- Wear durable eye protection when involved in activities that could cause traumatic risk to your vision, such as sports, dealing with firearms, playing paintball. Occupations where hammering, cutting, sawing, drilling, or working overhead are other examples.

Maintaining healthy eyesight also depends on getting sufficient vitamins and dietary nutrients. These nutrients play a key role in keeping the eye moist and helping protect your eyes from infection. A well balanced diet will provide most of what normal adults need. Foods rich in omega fatty acids, and leafy green veggies contain lots of valuable nutrients. Vitamins A, C, and E are essential for good eyesight. Lutein and zeaxanthin may protect the macula and retina. Watch your weight, blood pressure, and cholesterol levels. If you smoke, stop! Toxic cigarette smoke is linked to many serious eye conditions. Do everything possible to stay away from tobacco smoke, exhaust fumes, and other kinds of polluted air. If you have diabetes, you need to schedule regular eye exams and carefully monitor your blood sugar levels.

Popular Techniques to Relieve Eyestrain:

Eyestrain is common in the healthiest of people, especially today as we spend more time in front of computers. Try these tips to prevent or ease eyestrain.

- Stay fresh! When using a computer or doing concentrated activity such as sewing or reading, rest your eyes for five minutes every hour. Look away from your work, close your eyes, or simply stare off into space.
- Blink regularly. Blinking helps reduce evaporation of the tear film that protects the cornea. Forceful blinking also relieves the strain of the continuous focus when you have been reading or looking at a computer screen, increasing the amount of concentrated activity you can perform.
- While driving for long stretches, alternately focus on the dashboard and a faraway object. Changing the focus periodically will relax the eye muscles and prevent eyestrain.

Source: By Kathleen Doheny Reviewed by Louise Chang M.D www.webmd.com

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